US006082772A

United States Patent [19]

Matsumoto et al.

[11] **Patent Number: 6,082,772**

[45] **Date of Patent: Jul. 4, 2000**

[54] **AUTOMATIC INSERTION BOOKMARK**

[76] Inventors: **Shinsuke Matsumoto**; **Naomi Matsumoto**, both of 562-2, Oaza mada, Nakatsu-shi, Oita 871-0025, Japan

[21] Appl. No.: **09/424,410**

[22] PCT Filed: **Jan. 27, 1999**

[86] PCT No.: **PCT/JP97/00341**

§ 371 Date: **Nov. 23, 1999**

§ 102(e) Date: **Nov. 23, 1999**

[87] PCT Pub. No.: **WO99/38708**

PCT Pub. Date: **Aug. 5, 1999**

[30] **Foreign Application Priority Data**

Jan. 31, 1998 [JP] Japan 10-033771
Aug. 10, 1998 [JP] Japan 10-239544
Dec. 30, 1998 [JP] Japan 10-377326

[51] **Int. Cl.**[7] **B42D 9/00**
[52] **U.S. Cl.** **281/42**; 116/234
[58] **Field of Search** 116/234, 238, 116/239; 281/42, 36, 28, 51

[56] **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2,633,372	3/1953	Wilson	281/42
4,574,727	3/1986	Martin	116/234
5,408,950	4/1995	Porto	281/42
5,439,254	8/1995	Dorion	281/42
5,515,809	5/1996	Weinberg	116/239

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

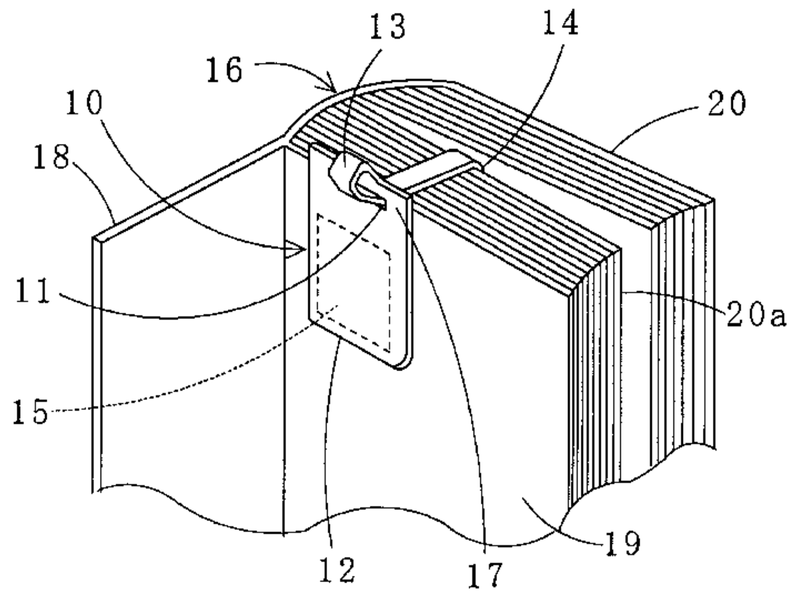
48-73057-01	12/1971	Japan .	
51-155948	5/1975	Japan .	
58-187461	12/1983	Japan .	
61-105175	7/1986	Japan .	
62-182770	11/1987	Japan .	
63-161867	10/1988	Japan .	
6-49068	7/1994	Japan .	
6-83363	11/1994	Japan .	
7-757	1/1995	Japan .	
3010637	2/1995	Japan .	

Primary Examiner—Willmon Fridie, Jr.
Attorney, Agent, or Firm—Armstrong, Westerman, Hattori, McLeland & Naughton

[57] **ABSTRACT**

An automatic insertion bookmark **10** designed to allow a bookmark portion **14** to be automatically inserted into and placed on an opened page **20***a* of a book **16**. The bookmark **10** includes a fixing portion **12**, a connecting portion **13**, and a bookmark portion **14**. The fixing portion **12** is either prefixed to one of the following or fixed thereto when the bookmark **10** is used: a back cover **18** of the book **16**; a front cover **20** of the book **16**; and, a leaf **19** of the book **16** in the immediate vicinity of either the back cover **18** or the front cover **20**. A proximal end of the connecting portion **13** is connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion **12**. Further, the bookmark portion **14** is connected to a distal end of the connecting portion **13**. When the bookmark **10** is used, the bookmark portion **14** is folded downward at a portion where the bookmark portion **14** and the connecting portion **13** are joined together. As a result, the bookmark portion **14** is directed downward in an opposed relationship to the fixing portion **12**.

5 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



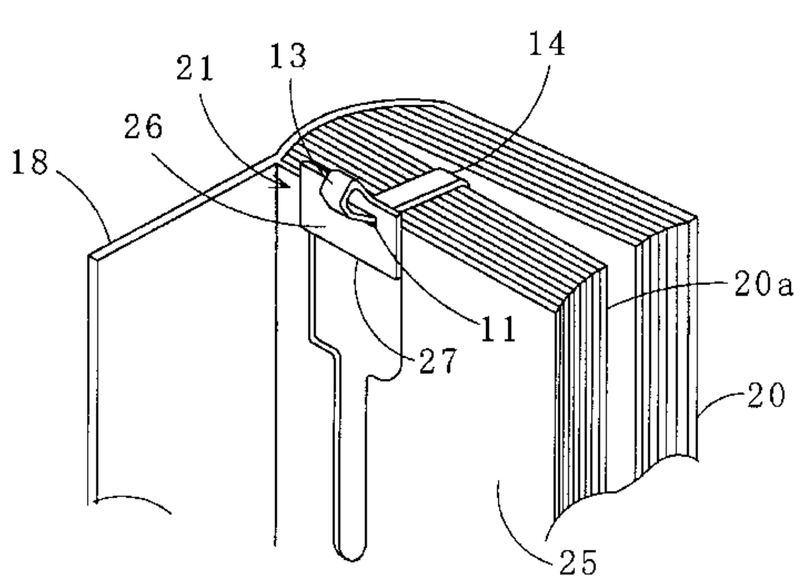


FIG.1(A)

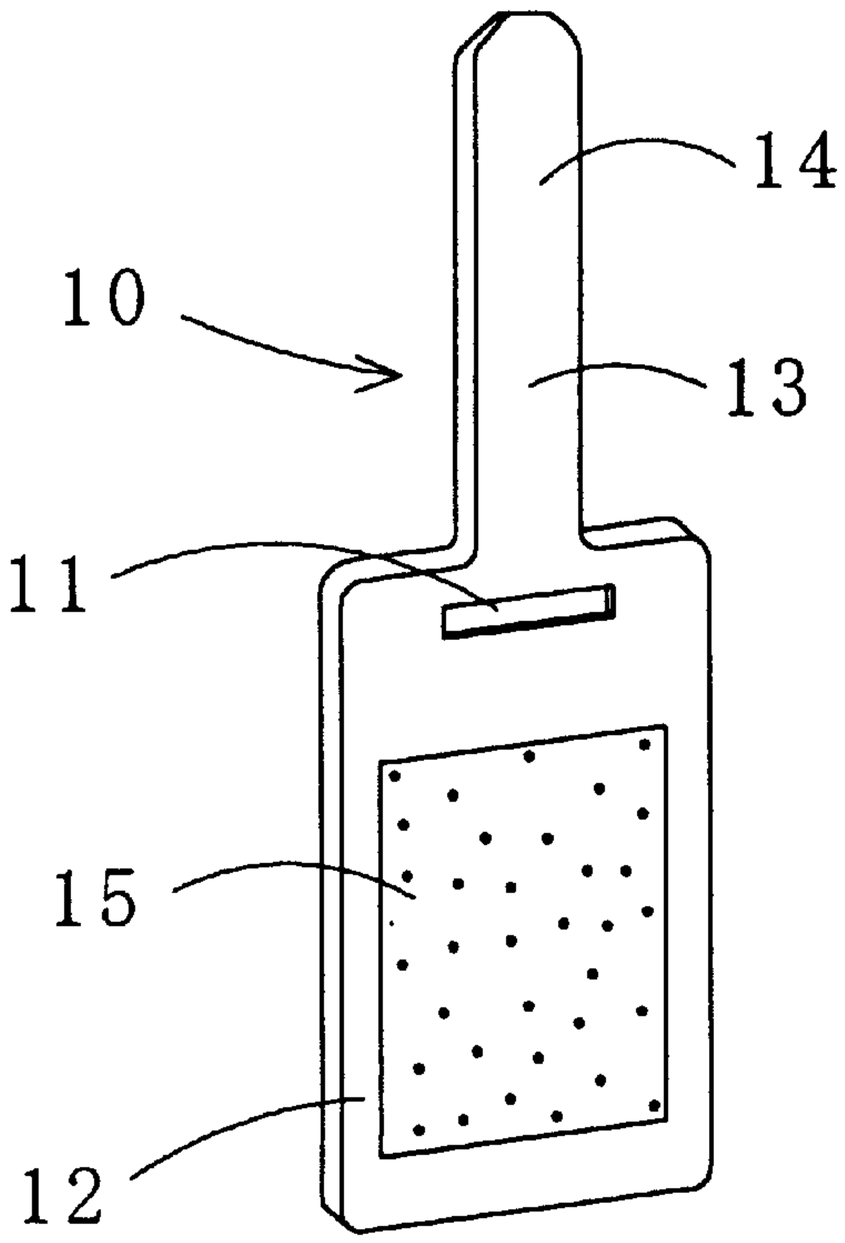
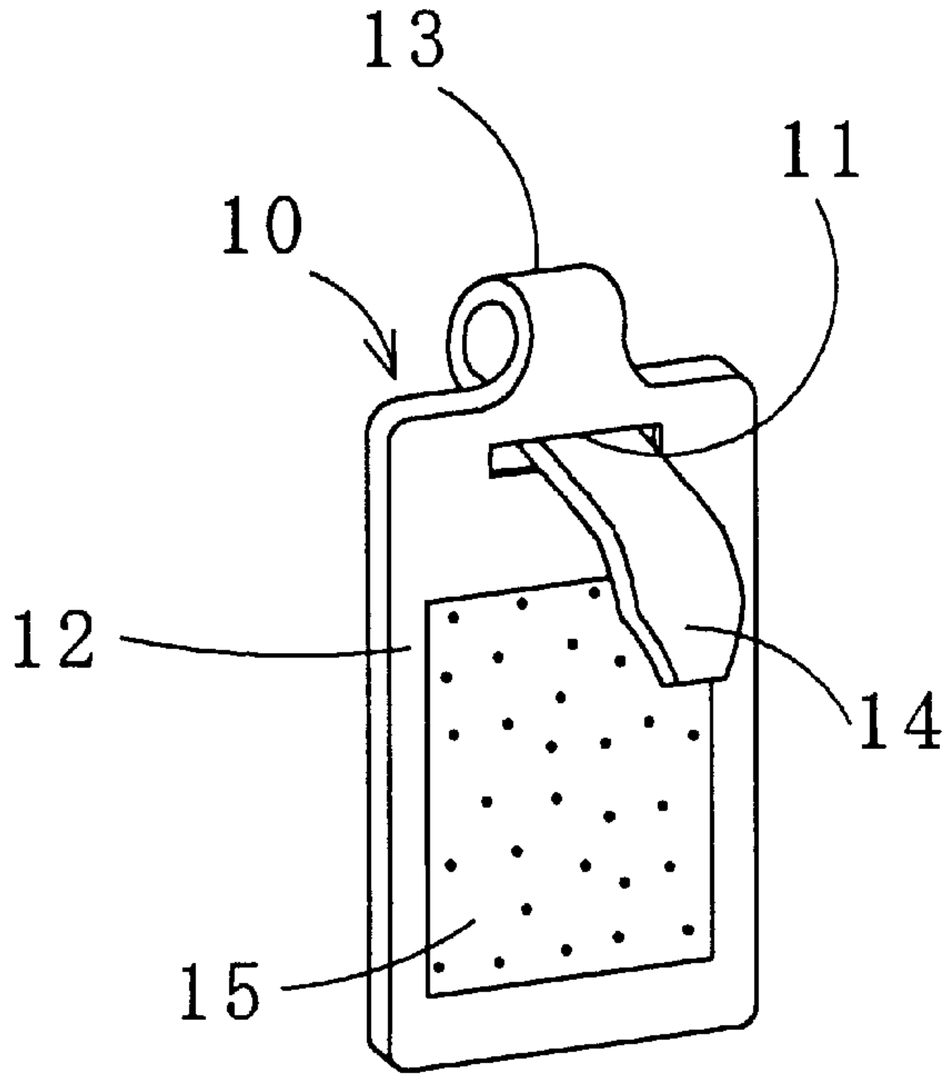


FIG.1(B)



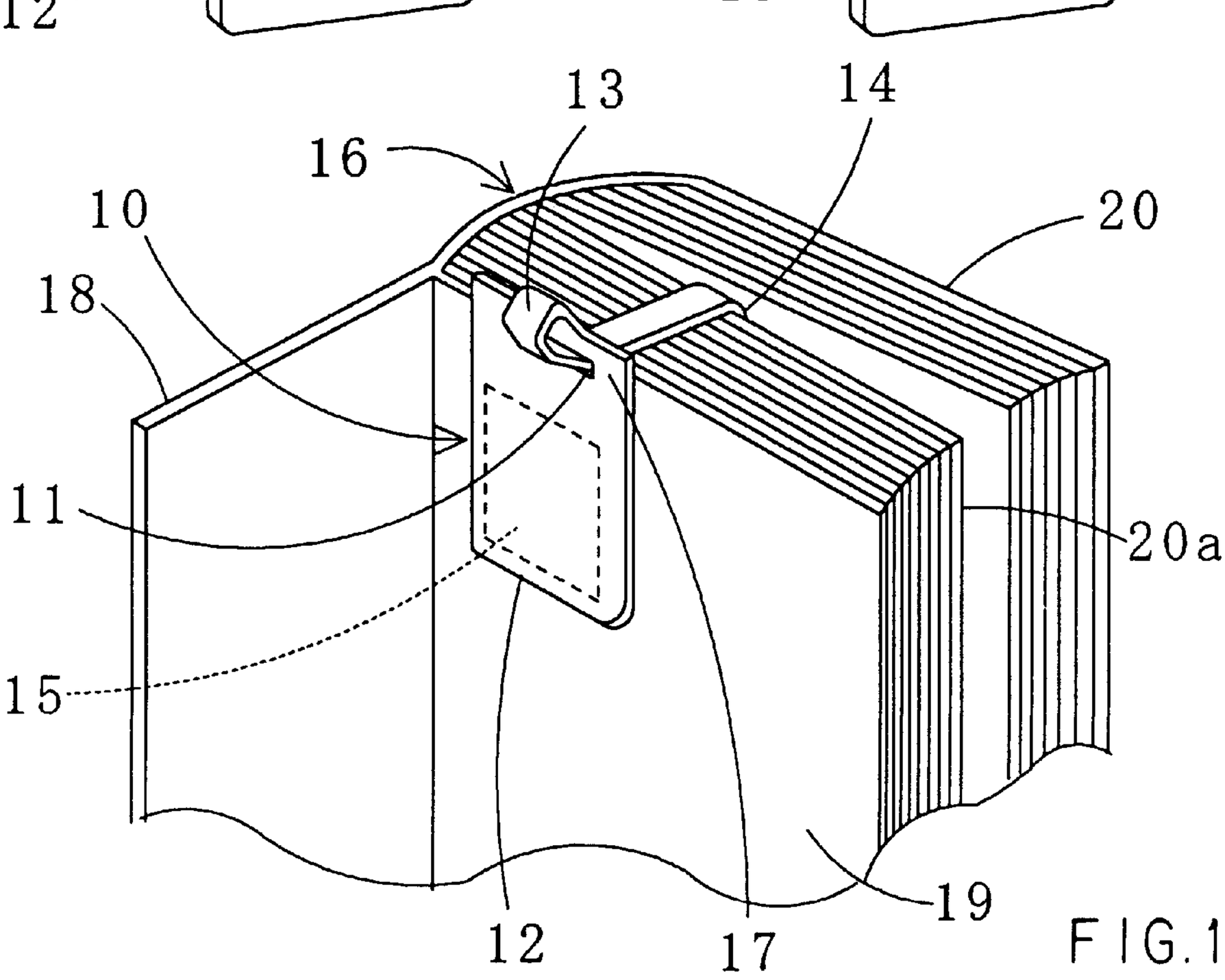


FIG.1(C)

FIG.2(A)

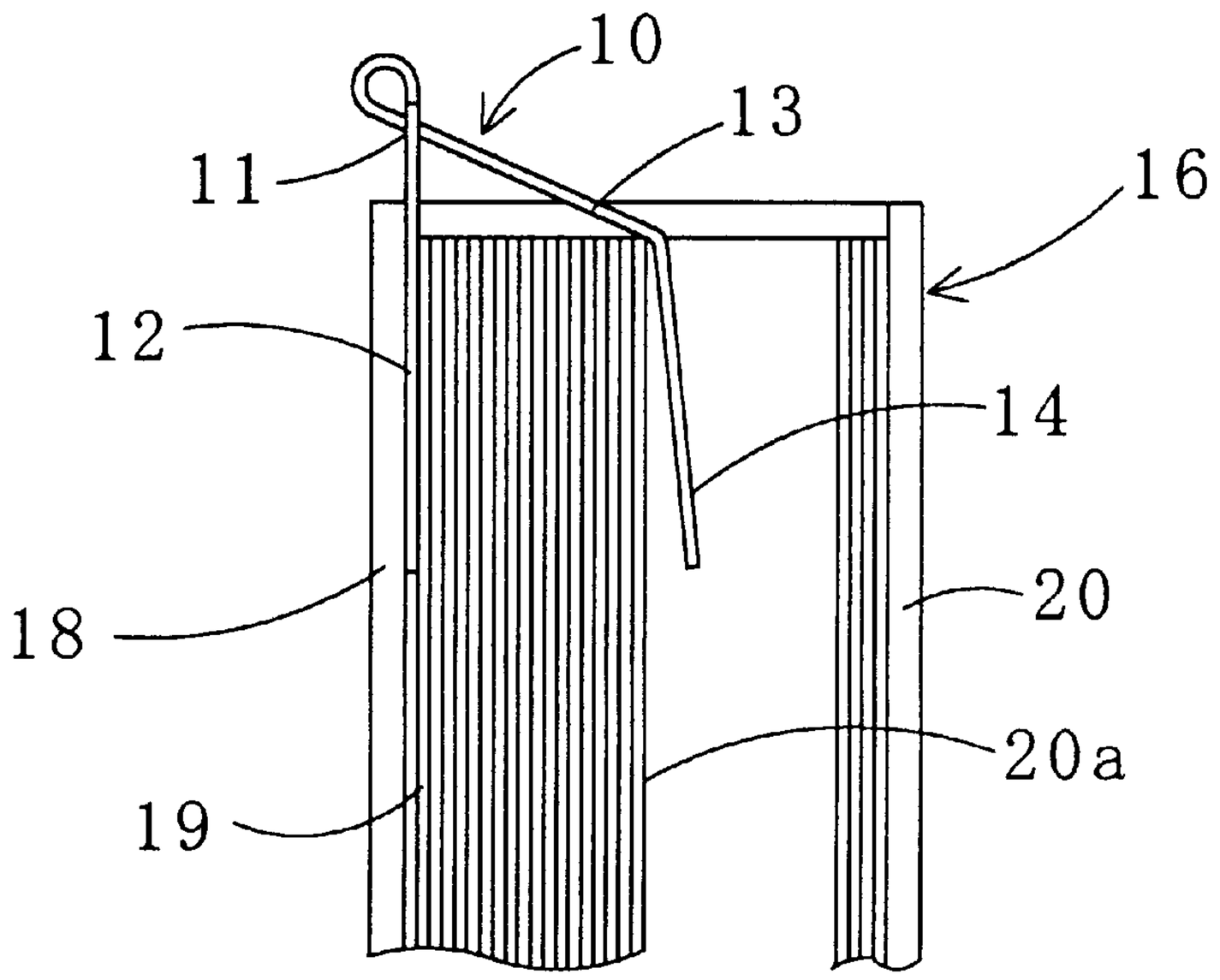


FIG.2(B)

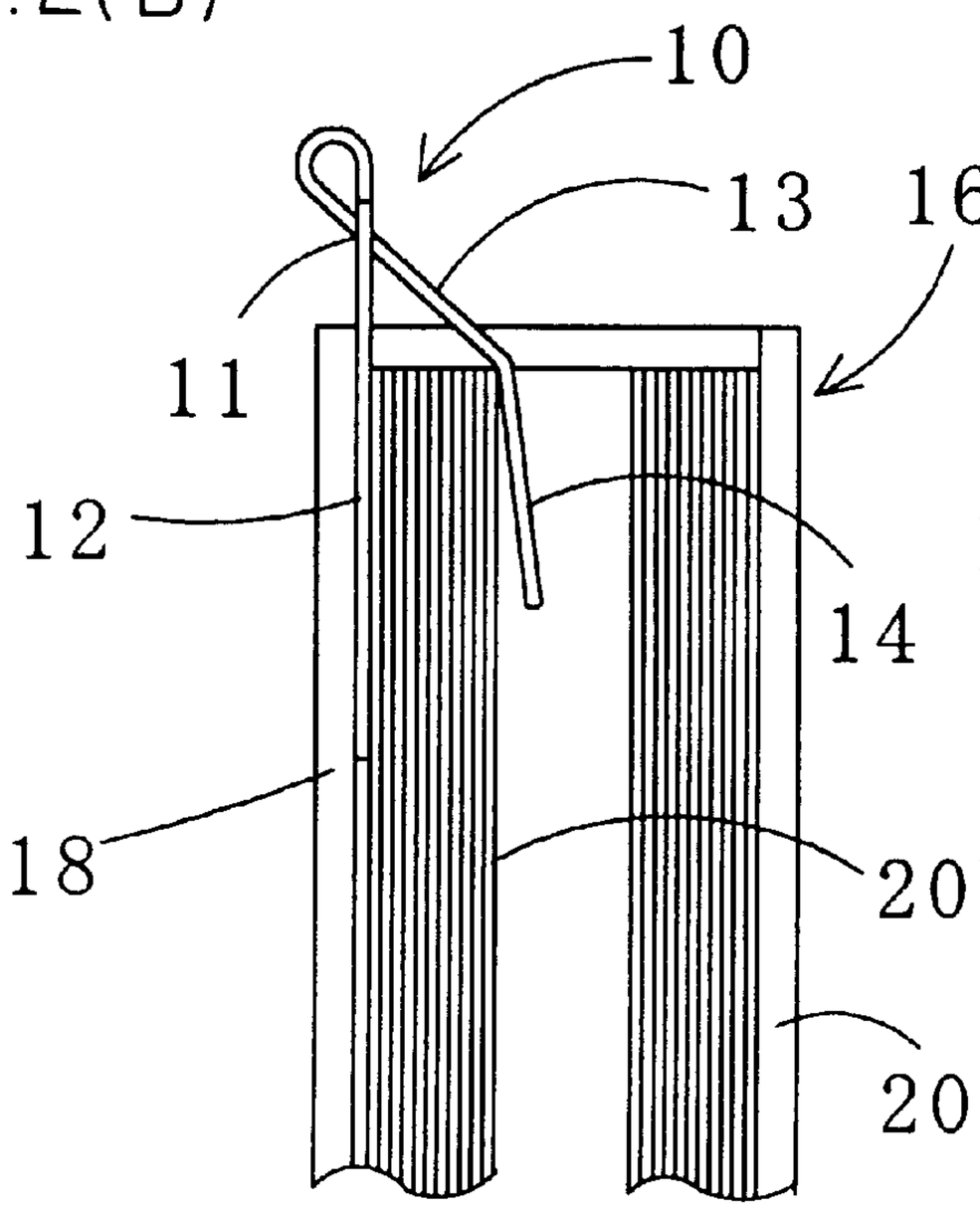


FIG.2(C)

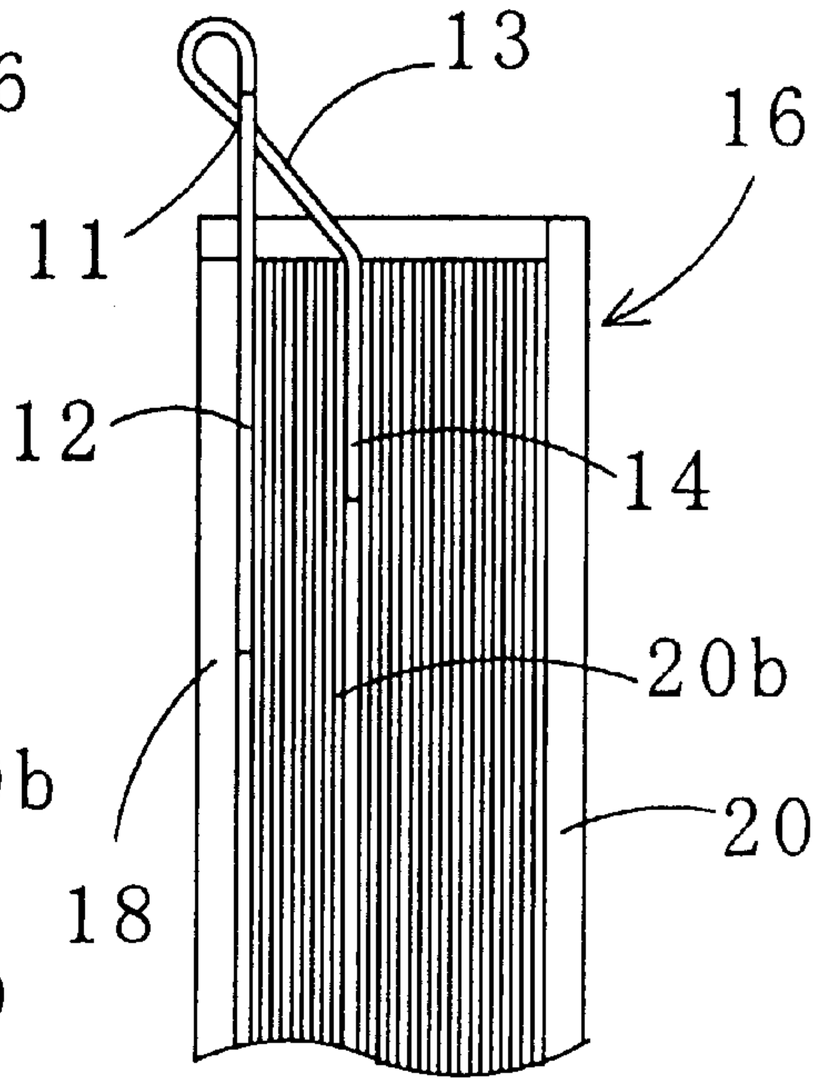


FIG. 3(A)

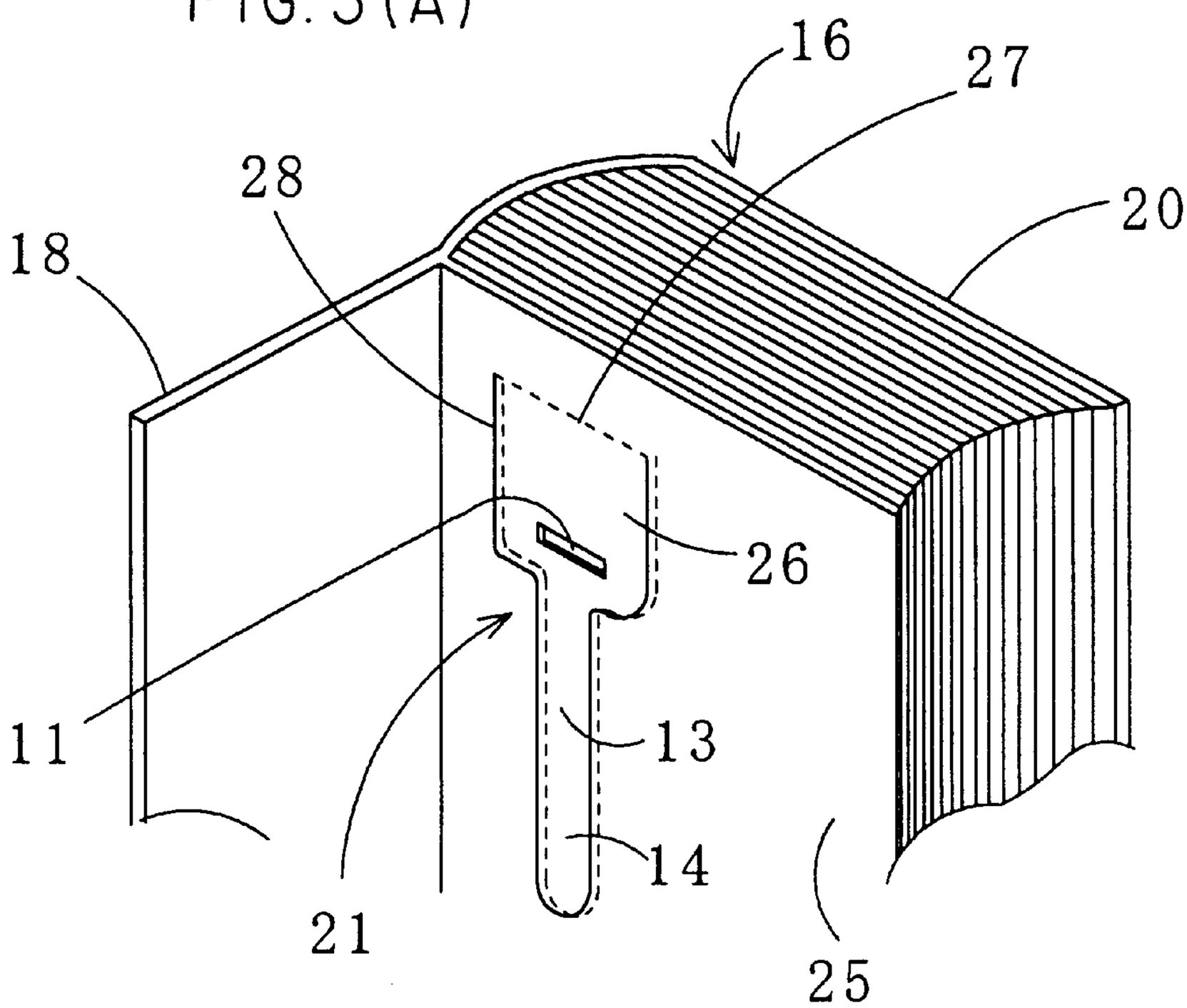


FIG. 3(B)

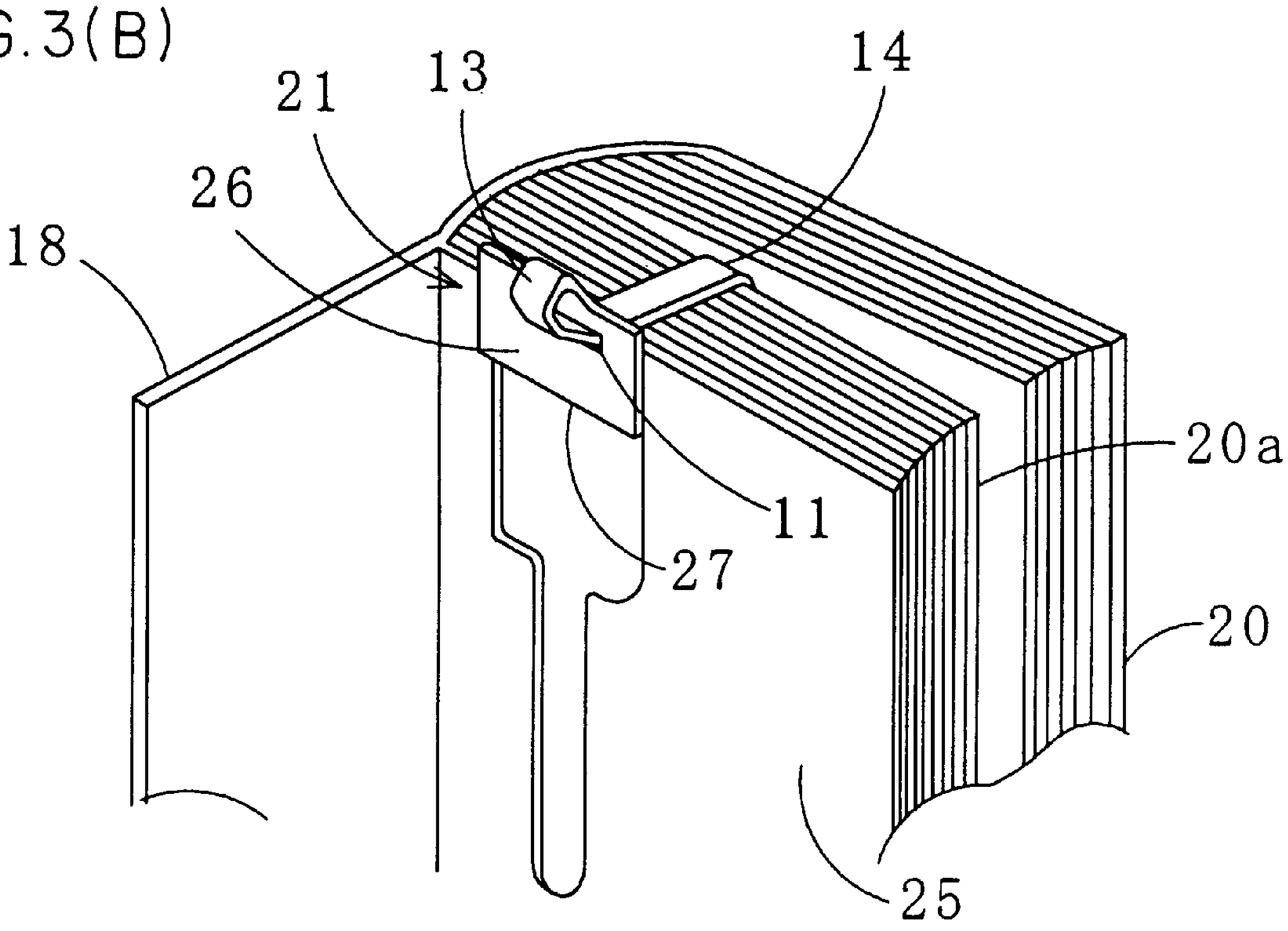


FIG. 4

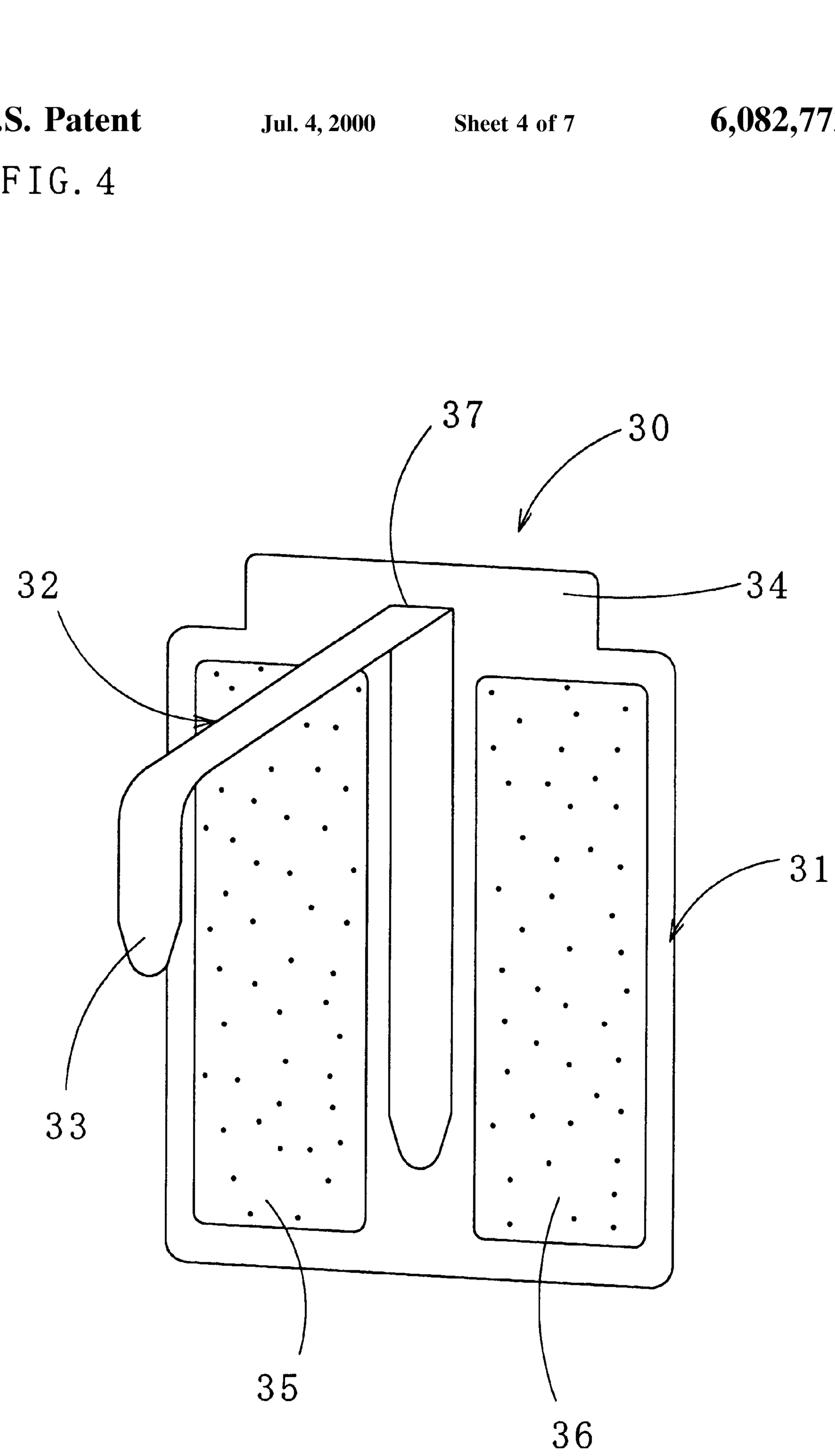


FIG.5(A)

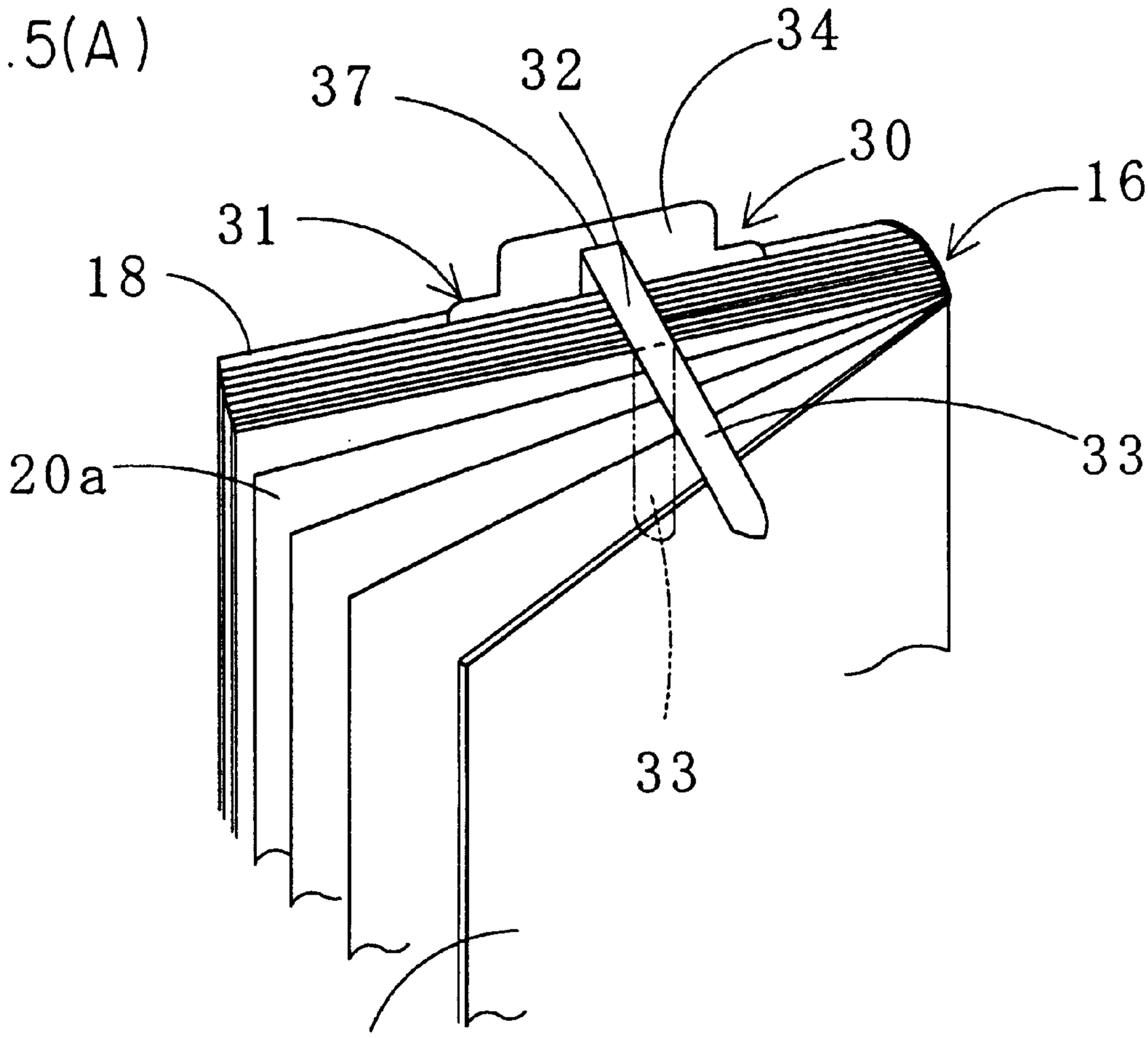


FIG.5(B)

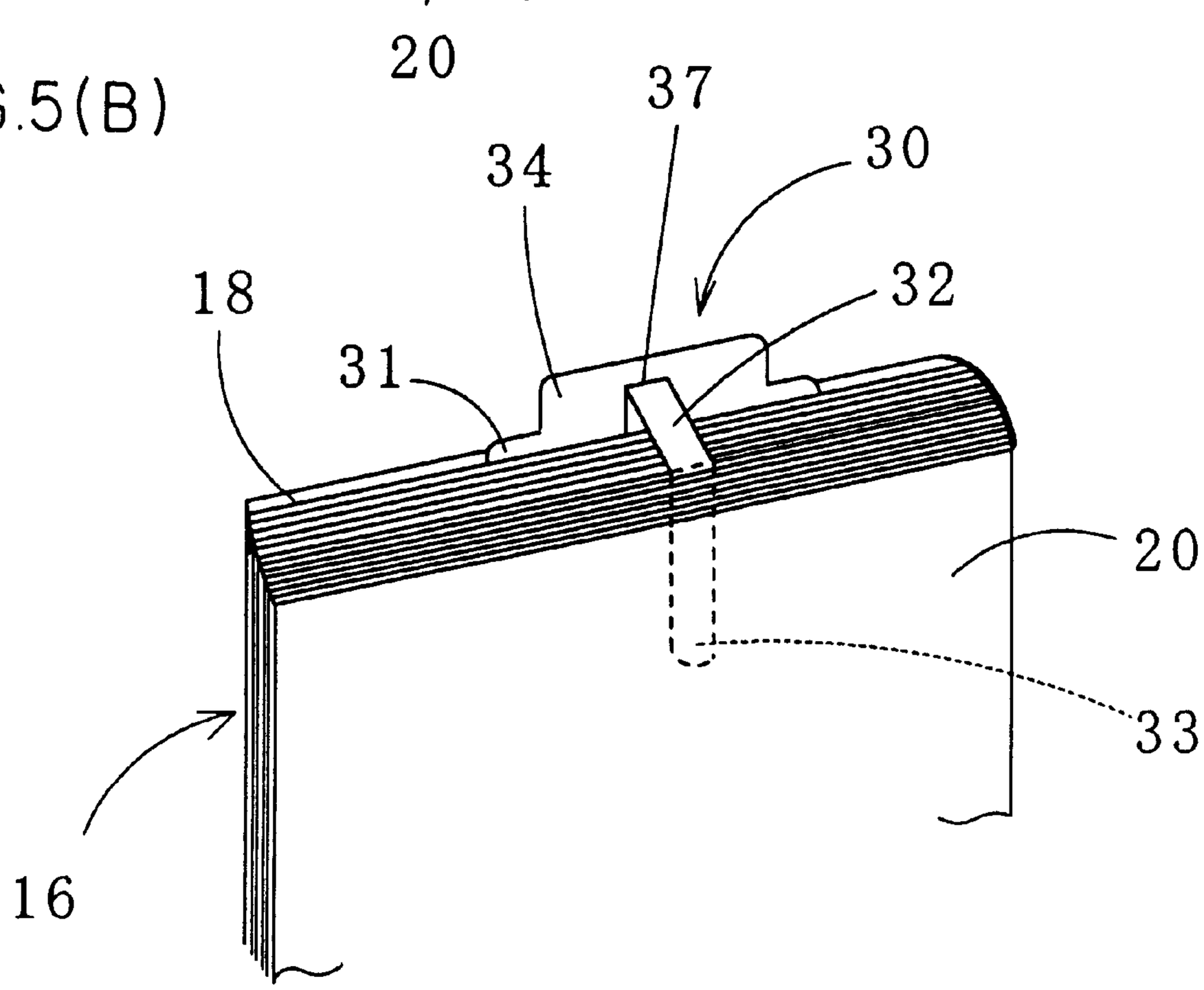


FIG.6(A)

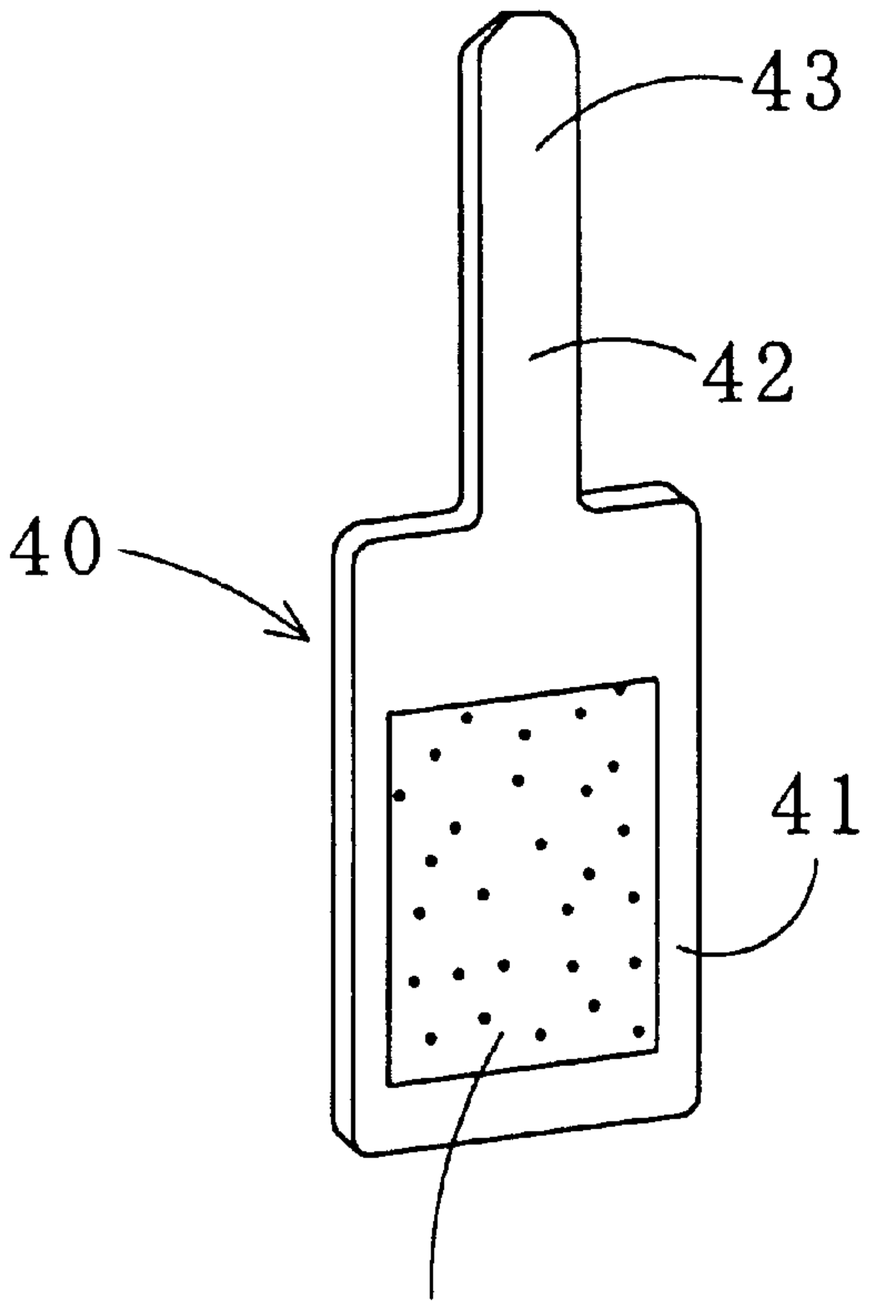


FIG.6(B)

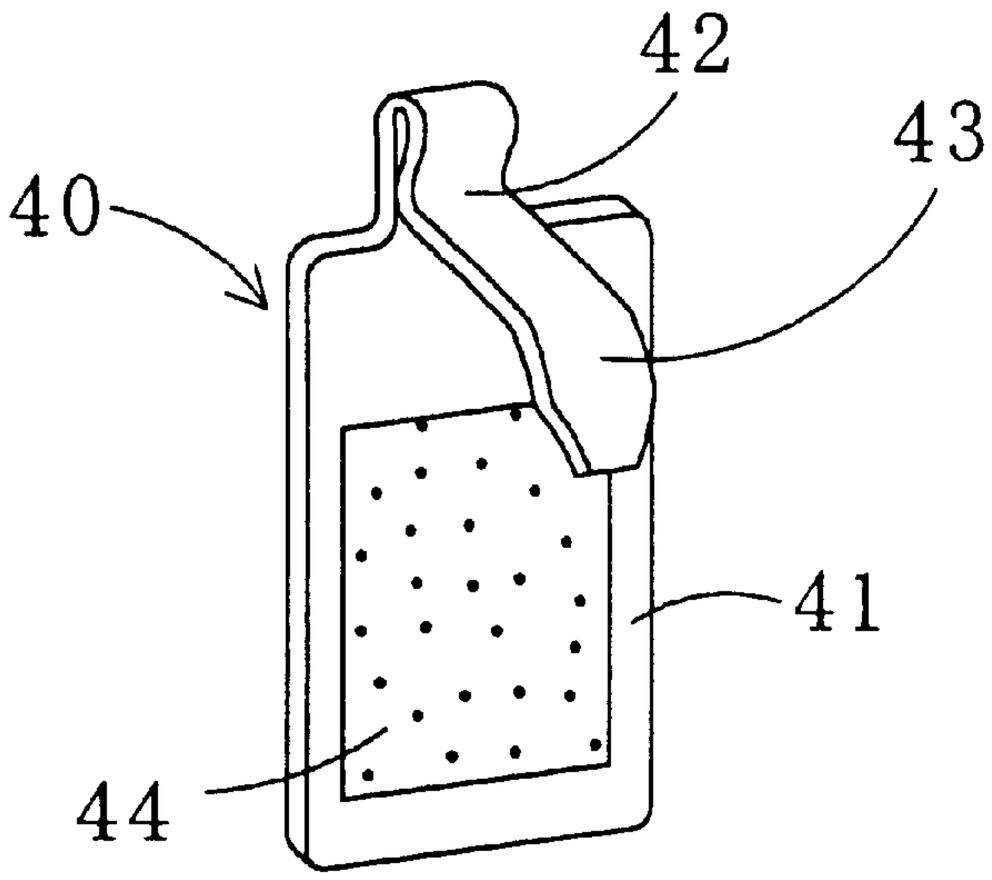


FIG.6(C)

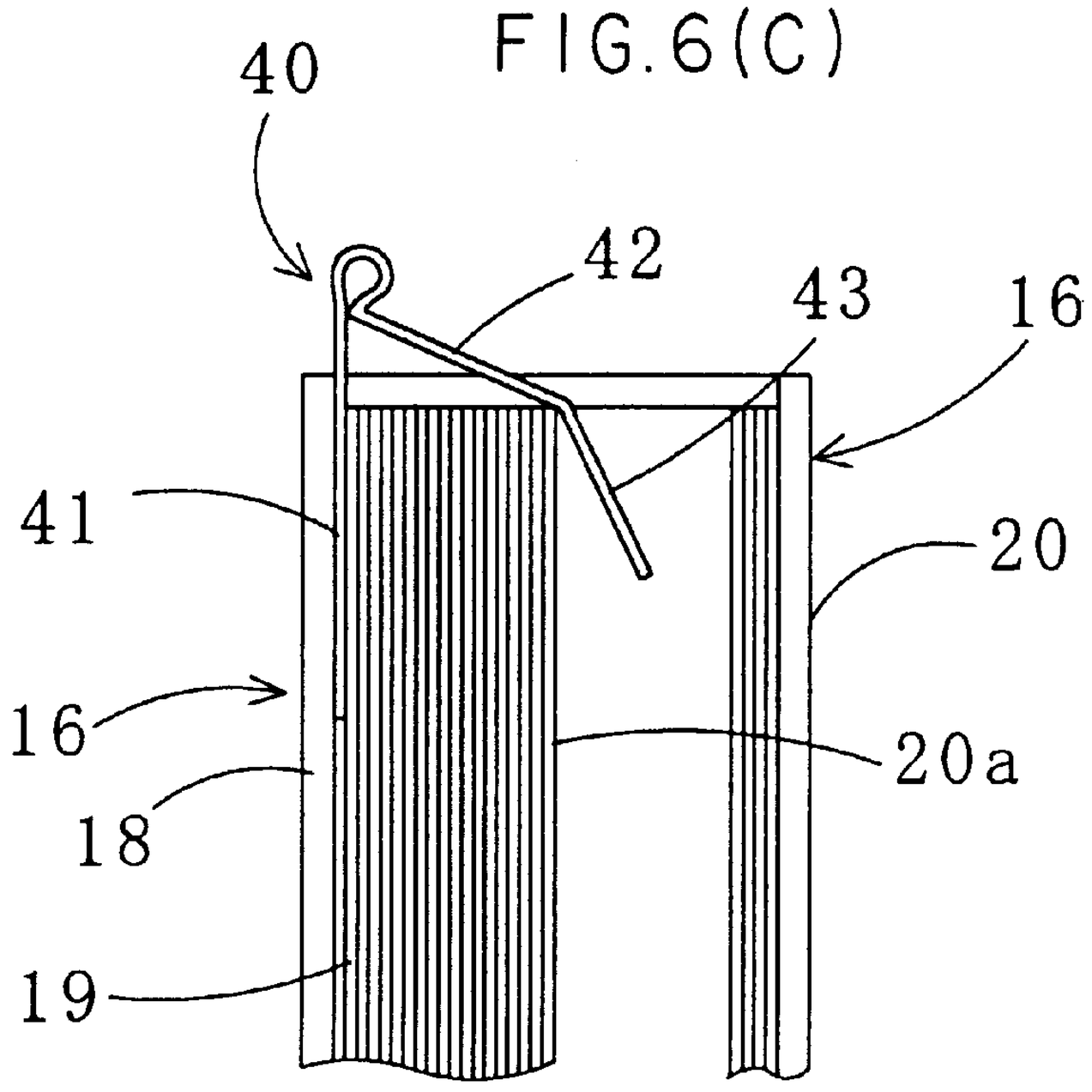


FIG. 7(A)

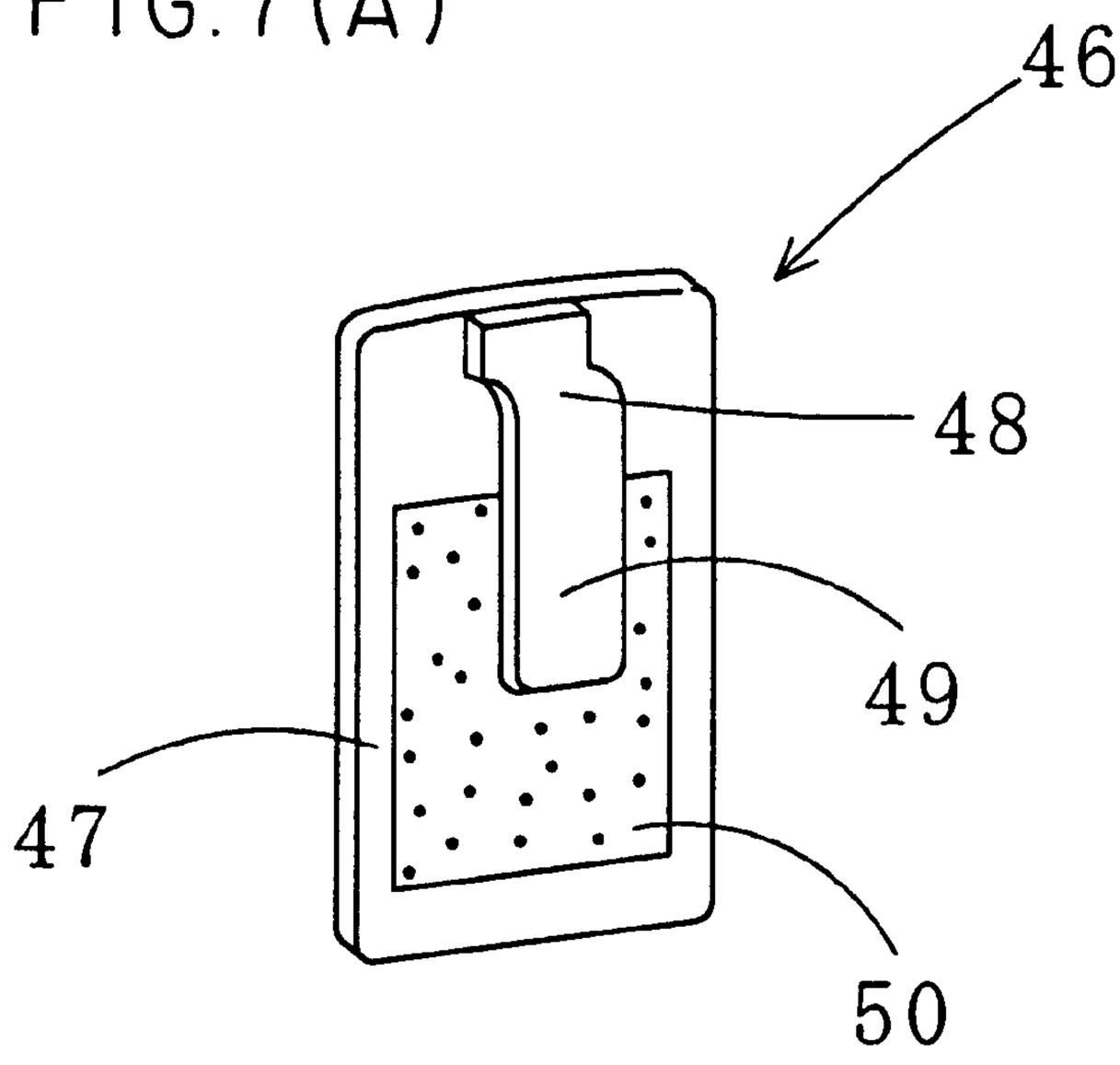
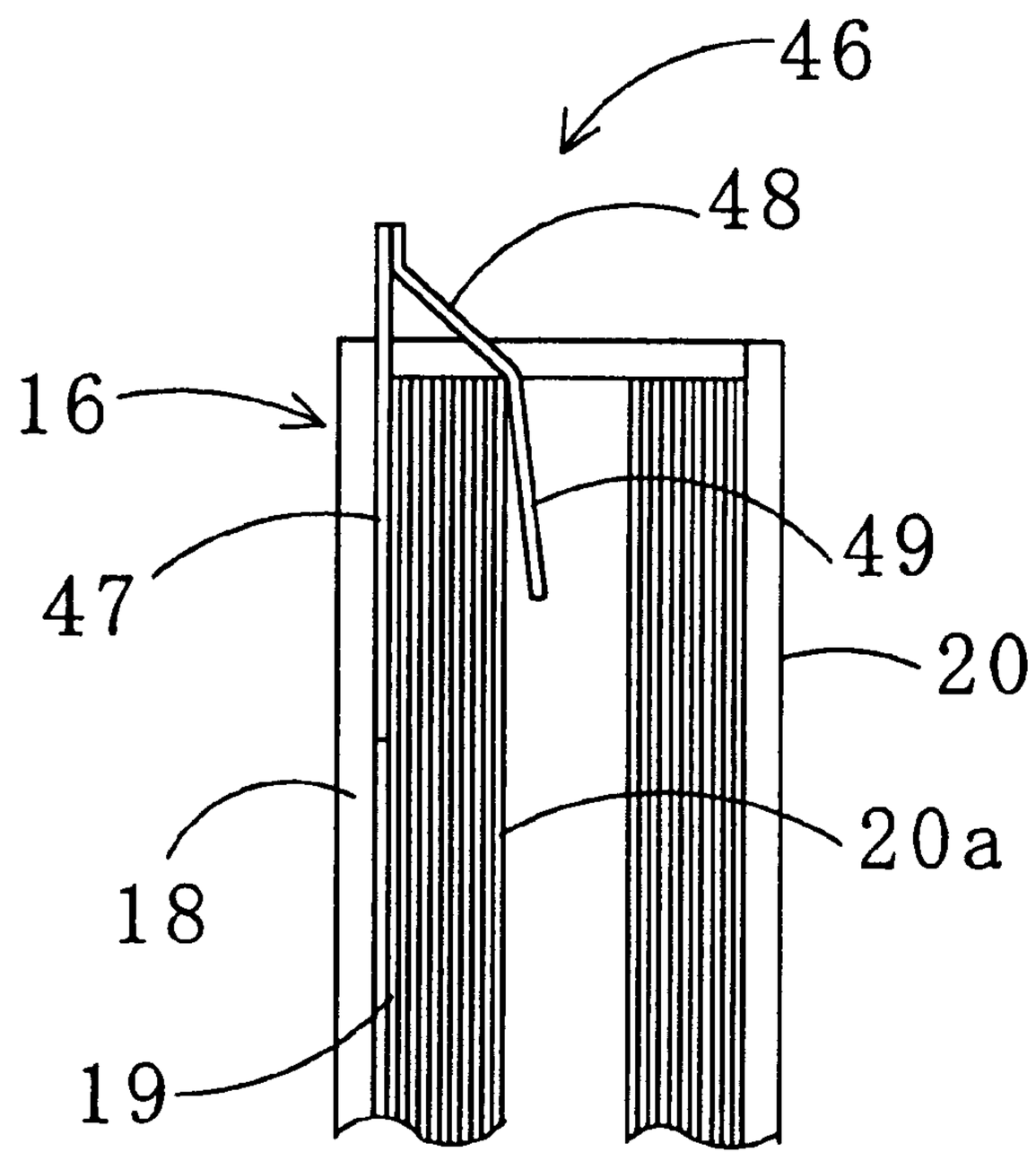


FIG. 7(B)



AUTOMATIC INSERTION BOOKMARK

TECHNICAL FIELD

This invention relates to an automatic insertion bookmark fitted to a book, having a bookmark portion automatically inserted between pages of the book, which pages are just read.

BACKGROUND ART

People who read books usually either interpose a bookmark between leaves of the book or fold back the leaf when interrupting reading and then closing the book, so that they can readily locate a page where they stopped reading. However, the now people who lead a busy life often read books for a chain of very short periods of time, such as, e.g., time of a commute to attend office or school, and its associated waiting time. In such a case, people sometimes forget to insert the bookmark between the pages of the book, and thus read the same page again when resuming reading. In order to obviate such an inconvenience, an automatic insertion bookmark has been proposed, in which when reading is interrupted, then a bookmark portion is automatically inserted between pages that were opened immediately before the book is closed.

One example of such an automatic insertion bookmark is proposed in, e.g., published Japanese Utility Model Application Laid-Open No. 6-83363. The bookmark as proposed in this publication includes a fixing plate, a band-like elastic plate, and a tongue piece. The fixing plate has an angular C shaped nick. The elastic plate extends sideward from one side of the fixing plate at an upper portion thereof. The tongue piece is disposed on the underside of the elastic plate at a distal end thereof. When the bookmark is used, the fixing plate is fixed to a book by means of the aforesaid nick, and then the tongue piece is laid on an opened page of the book. In this state, when the page is turned over, then the tongue piece is automatically placed on the following page. When the book is closed, then the tongue piece is held, as such, on the page. Thus, the tongue piece realizes a purpose of the automatic insertion bookmark.

However, in the automatically placed bookmark as proposed in the above publication, the rectangular-shaped fixing plate, bandlike elastic plate, and tongue piece are formed by a sheet, and are planar in their entirety. Accordingly, when a large number of pages are read and then turned over, it follows that many leaves of the book are present between the fixing plate and the tongue piece. As a result, the elastic plate is bent into a S-shape, and is then subjected to bending stress or torsional stress. This causes a problem that the tongue piece fails to reliably follow sequentially opened pages.

A further problem with the above bookmark is a poor appearance because the upper portion of the fixing plate and the entire surface of the elastic plate extend outward from the top of the book.

Another automatic insertion bookmark is proposed in published Japanese Patent Application Laid-Open No. 63-21192. The bookmark according to this publication includes fixing members and a string-like object. The fixing members are independent and separated from one another. The string-like object is made of a shrinkable raw material that has a proper length. The string-like object is suspendingly spanned between the fixing members. The fixing members are fixed to a cover of a book at respective positions that are spaced apart from a corner of the cover by respective small distances. The string-like object for connecting the fixing members together is spanned between the fixing members so as to extend across a corner portion of a predetermined page of the book.

However, the automatic insertion bookmark as proposed in the above publication has a problem that two fixing members must laboriously be fitted to the book. Further, the string-like object, which is made of a resilient member, must be fitted with some degree of tension. This brings about another problem that wrinkles in leaves of the book or the tendency of the leaves to bend would occur when the book is small in thickness because such tensioned string-like object pulls the corner portion of the book.

DISCLOSURE OF INVENTION

In view of the above, an object of the present invention is to provide an automatic insertion bookmark free to use for any book regardless of whether the book is greater or smaller in thickness, in which when opened and read pages of the book are closed, then a bookmark portion is brought into reliable insertion between such closed pages.

The automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, which serves the above object, is designed to allow the bookmark portion to be automatically inserted into and placed on an opened page of the book at an upper portion of the page. The automatic insertion bookmark includes a fixing portion fixed to the book, the bookmark portion interposed between the pages that are just read, and a connecting portion for connecting the fixing portion and the bookmark portion together. A proximal end of the connecting portion is connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion. The connecting portion is folded either at one position where the connecting portion and the fixing portion are seamlessly joined together or at another position adjacent to the former position. The bookmark portion is folded either at one position where the connecting portion and the bookmark portion are seamlessly joined together or at another position adjacent to the former position. As a result, the bookmark portion is directed downward in an opposed relationship to the fixing portion. Accordingly, the interconnected fixing, connecting, and bookmark portions assume an inverted U-shape in their entirety when seen from the side thereof during use thereof.

In the automatic insertion bookmark having the above construction, when the fixing portion is fixed to an upper portion of, e.g., either a front cover of the book or a back cover of the book, or alternatively a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of the front or back cover, then the bookmark portion is automatically placed on an opened page of the book. Further, when the page is turned over, then the bookmark portion is laid on the following page. When reading is stopped and then the book is closed, then the bookmark portion is automatically inserted between closed leaves of the book.

The fixing portion preferably has an adhesive agent layer formed on the front or reverse side thereof for either tentatively fixing or fixing the fixing portion to the front or back cover of the book, or alternatively to the leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of the aforesaid front or back cover. Thus, the fixing portion can be readily fixed to the book at any predetermined position thereof. In this connection, the above phrase "tentatively fixing the fixing portion" shows a state in which the fixing portion affixed to the book at one position thereof is removed therefrom, and is then re affixed to the book at another predetermined position, thereby providing continuing use of the automatic insertion bookmark. Further, similarly to universally avail-

able bookmarks, a sheet of elastic paper, which is pliable to a certain degree, is preferably used by way of a material of the automatic insertion bookmark. Alternatively, the automatic insertion bookmark may be made of either a plastic sheet having flexibility or, in extreme cases, a metal plate.

In the automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, an insertion through hole can be formed at the upper portion of the fixing portion, which upper portion is connected to the connecting portion. The hole is formed by a transversely elongated hole, through which the bookmark and connecting portions can be inserted. Further, the interconnected bookmark and connecting portions are inserted through the insertion-through hole in a state of the connecting portion being folded back at a certain portion thereof. As a result, the bookmark portion is readily directed downward in an opposed relationship to the book. Consequently, the bookmark portion can be placed on an opened page of the book without allowing a bold crease to be formed at a position where the connecting portion and the bookmark portion are seamlessly joined together.

In another automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, a fixing portion, a connecting portion, and a bookmark portion may be formed by profiles thereof being cut out from either a front cover of a book or a back cover of the book, or alternatively from a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of the aforesaid front or back covers. A proximal end of the fixing portion is seamlessly joined to an upper portion of either the front cover or the back cover, or alternatively to an upper portion of the aforesaid leaf. Then, when the automatic insertion bookmark is used, the proximal end of the fixing portion is folded back. As a result, the insertion-through hole, which is formed at an upper portion of the fixing portion, is allowed to protrude from the top of the book. Thus, the automatic insertion bookmark can be incorporated in each book during its manufacturing process. In addition, such a built-in bookmark eliminates troubles such as loss of the bookmark during use thereof.

In yet another automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, interconnected connecting and bookmark portions may be formed in a sheet of a fixing portion by being cut out from the sheet of the fixing portion. A proximal end of the connecting portion is foldably connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion. Then, when the automatic insertion bookmark is used, the bookmark and connecting portions are pulled from the fixing portion. In this way, the connecting and bookmark portions having respective predetermined shapes are formed. With the automatic insertion bookmark having the above construction, a sheet of paper may be press formed with a nick in order to produce the automatic insertion bookmark.

In a further automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, interconnected connecting and bookmark portions may be bent by being folded back at one position where integrally interconnected fixing and connecting portions are seamlessly joined together, or alternatively at another position of the connecting portion adjacent to the former position. The folded connecting portion is further bent at an intermediate position thereof in a direction opposite to the direction in which the connecting portion was previously folded back. As a result, the bookmark portion, which is bent and seamlessly joined to a distal end of the connecting portion, remains directed downward. Thus, the automatic insertion bookmark that is extremely easy to manufacture and use is provided.

In the above-described automatic insertion bookmark, the fixing, connecting, and bookmark portions are desirably formed seamlessly by a single sheet, thereby making it possible to produce the automatic insertion bookmark at lower costs.

In a yet further automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, interconnected connecting and bookmark portions may be formed by a sheet different from a sheet of a fixing portion. A proximal end of the connecting portion is secured to an upper portion of the fixing portion. As a result, the bookmark portion is directed in a downward direction of the fixing portion, whereby the automatic insertion bookmark is folded at smaller angles at one demarcation portion between the fixing portion and the connecting portion and at another demarcation portion between the connecting portion and the bookmark portion. Consequently, the automatic insertion bookmark having the following features is provided: the bookmark portion is readily inserted into the book by being slightly bent; and, the inserted bookmark portion is less likely to break loose from the book.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. **1**(A), **1**(B), and **1**(C) are descriptive illustrations, showing an automatic insertion bookmark according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. **2**(A), **2**(B), and **2**(C) are cross-sectional views, illustrating how the automatic insertion bookmark is used.

FIGS. **3**(A) and **3**(B) are descriptive illustrations, showing an automatic insertion bookmark according to a second embodiment;

FIG. **4** is a perspective view, illustrating an automatic insertion bookmark according to a third embodiment;

FIGS. **5**(A) and **5**(B) are perspective view, illustrating how the automatic insertion bookmark is used;

FIGS. **6**(A), **6**(B), and **6**(C) are descriptive illustrations, showing how an automatic insertion bookmark according to a fourth embodiment is use; and,

FIGS. **7**(A) and **7**(B) are descriptive illustrations, showing an automatic insertion bookmark according to a fifth embodiment.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

As illustrated in FIGS. **1**(A), **1**(B), and **1**(C), an automatic insertion bookmark **10** according to a first embodiment of the present invention assumes a planar shape when being unused. The automatic insertion bookmark **10** is made of a sheet of synthetic resin having elasticity (or alternatively, a sheet of paper, a rubber sheet, etc.). The bookmark **10** includes a fixing portion **12**, a connecting portion **13**, and a bookmark portion **14**. The fixing portion **12** has a transversely elongated hole (slot) **11** at an upper portion thereof by way of one example of a insertion-through hole. The connecting portion **13** is integrally connected to the fixing portion **12** at the uppermost central portion thereof. The bookmark portion **14** is seamlessly joined as one-piece to the connecting portion **13** at an upper portion thereof. These components will now be described in detail.

The fixing portion **12** is fabricated from a rectangular sheet (e.g., nearly 3–4 cm wide by 4–5 cm long) whose four corners are arcuately chamfered. An adhesive agent layer **15** is formed on one of both sides of the fixing portion **12**. When the adhesive agent layer **15** is unused, a protective sheet is attached to the surface of the adhesive agent layer **15**. The protective sheet is made of a sheet of synthetic resin or the like. Meanwhile, when the bookmark **10** is used, then the protective sheet is detached from the surface of the adhesive

agent layer **15** in order to expose the adhesive agent layer **15**. The adhesive agent layer **15** is preferably formed by a bonding agent that has a reduced level of adhesive strength such as to permit continual use. As shown in FIG. **1**(C), the adhesive agent layer **15** may be formed over the entire surface of the fixing portion **12** except for an exposed portion **17**. The exposed portion **17** is part of the fixing portion **12**, which is displayed from the top of a book **16** when the bookmark **10** is used. Alternatively, as shown in FIG. **1**(A), the adhesive agent layer **15** may be formed on the surface of the fixing portion **12** except for the exposed portion **17**, and further except for an about 3 to 4 mm wide area that is surrounded by the periphery of the fixing portion **12**. No bonding agent is applied over that particular area.

The connecting portion **13** and the bookmark portion **14** are seamlessly joined together as one-piece at the uppermost central portion of the fixing portion **12**. The connecting portion (also an elastic portion) **13** and the bookmark portion **14** are formed into a band shape having a width of nearly 5 to 7 mm. The connecting and bookmark portions **13**, **14** are desirably made of a transparent sheet of synthetic resin. In particular, since the bookmark portion **14** is laid on a page of the book **16**, the bookmark portion **14** is preferably formed by a transparent sheet of synthetic resin or the like, as otherwise the book is rendered illegible. There exists no definite demarcation between the connecting portion **13** and the bookmark portion **14**. The bookmark portion **14** includes a rounded distal end. According to the present embodiment, the connecting and bookmark portions **13**, **14** are some 3 to 5 cm in full length, but may be made longer when the book is larger in thickness.

The transversely elongated hole **11** is formed at the upper portion of the fixing portion **12**, and the interconnected bookmark and connecting portions **14**, **13** are fitted into the hole **11**. The width of the hole **11** in a transverse direction of the fixing portion **12** is greater than widths of the bookmark and connecting portions **14**, **13** by nearly 1 to 2 mm so as to allow the bookmark and connecting portions **14**, **13** to be loosely inserted into the hole **11**.

According to this embodiment, the hole **11** has a clearance of some 0.5 to 1.5 mm formed in a vertical direction of the fixing portion **12**. Alternatively, the transversely elongated hole according to the present invention may include a wider groove-shaped nick that has upwardly directed notches of 1 to 2 mm heights at both sides of the nick. In this case, the length of the nick in the transverse direction of the fixing portion **12** is slightly greater than the width of the connecting portion **13** in a transverse direction thereof. In addition, there is not a slightest clearance formed in the vertical direction of the fixing portion **12**.

As illustrated in FIG. **1**(C), when the automatic insertion bookmark **10** is used, the fixing portion **12** is glued onto a leaf **19** of the book **16** at an upper portion thereof through the exposed adhesive agent layer **15**. The leaf **19** is a page that comes into view when a back cover **18** of the book **16** (or, a front cover **20** of the book **16**) is turned over. In other words, the leaf **19** is a page present in the immediate vicinity of the back cover **18** (or, the front cover **20**). When the fixing portion **12** is glued onto the leaf **19** as described above, the transversely elongated hole **11**, which is located at the upper portion of the fixing portion **12**, must be exposed at an upward position from the top of the book **16**. Then, as shown in FIGS. **1**(B) and **1**(C), the interconnected bookmark and connecting portions **14**, **13** are folded back gradually to insert the distal end of the bookmark portion **14** through the hole **11**. The inserted bookmark portion **14** is then pulled, and the proximal end of the connecting portion **13** is thereby folded back to permit the connecting portion **13** to be inserted through the hole **11**. Thereafter, as seen from FIG. **2**(A), either the connecting portion **13** or the bookmark portion **14** is held in a folded state so as not to return to its original shape, and is then inserted between predetermined pages of the book **16**.

In this state, a leaf of the book **16** is turned over, as illustrated in FIG. **2**(B). Then, the bookmark portion **14** is automatically placed on an opened page **20***b*, and is thereby inserted between the opened pages of the book **16**. As illustrated in FIG. **2**(C), when the book **16** is closed, then the bookmark portion **14** is left between the closed pages of the book **16**. Therefore, when the book **16** is read again, reading can be resumed from the page **20***b*, on which the bookmark portion **14** is laid.

In this embodiment, the fixing portion **12** is mounted on the leaf that comes into view when the back cover **18** is turned over (i.e., the leaf **19** in the immediate vicinity of the back cover **18**). Alternatively, the fixing portion **12** may be fitted directly onto the back cover **18**. In some cases, the fixing portion **12** may be secured to the front cover **20**.

As previously described, the automatic insertion bookmark **10** is used in a state of the connecting portion **13** being inserted into the transversely elongated hole **11**. This structure provides an advantage in that the bookmark portion **14** is readily oriented toward the fixing portion, whereby the bookmark portion **14** inserted between the pages of the book **16** is resistant to dislodgment therefrom.

Another automatic insertion bookmark **21** according to a second embodiment as shown in FIGS. **3**(A) and **3**(B) will now be described. It is noted that the same reference numerals are hereinafter given for components identical to those of the bookmark **10** according to the previous embodiment; therefore, detailed descriptions related thereto will be omitted. (This rule applies to all hereinafter described embodiments.)

The automatic insertion bookmark **21** according to this embodiment is formed by respective profiles of a fixing portion **26**, a connecting portion **13**, and a bookmark portion **14** being cut out from a leaf **25** of a book **16**. The leaf **25** is a page in the immediate vicinity of a back cover **18** (or, a front cover **20**) of the book **16** (i.e., the leaf **25** is a page which comes into view when the back cover **18** is turned over). The connecting and bookmark portions **13**, **14** are seamlessly joined as one-piece to the fixing portion **26**. No adhesive agent layer is formed on the fixing portion **26**. Instead, a proximal end of the fixing portion **26** is seamlessly joined to the leaf **25** through a folding line **27**. The folding line **27** is not necessarily required to form in advance. As shown in FIG. **3**(B), the fixing portion **26** is formed at a position which causes a transversely elongated hole **11** to be exposed from the top of the book **16** when the fixing portion **26** is folded back. The hole **11** is formed at an upper portion of the fixing portion **26**. Reference numeral **28** denotes a line, along which the automatic insertion bookmark **21** is cut out.

When the automatic insertion bookmark **21** is used, the interconnected fixing, connecting, and bookmark portions **26**, **13**, **14** formed along the cutout line **28** are pulled and then folded back at the folding line **27**, thereby standing the fixing portion **26**. Then, the bookmark portion **14** and the connecting portion **13** are inserted through the hole **11**. The inserted bookmark portion **14** is folded at a proximal end thereof. Then, the folded bookmark portion **14** is laid on a leaf **20***a* that has been turned up (opened), and is thereby inserted between pages of the book **16**, which pages are just

read. Thus, the bookmark portion **14** is automatically inserted between the pages that are just read.

Next, still another automatic insertion bookmark **30** according to a third embodiment as shown in FIGS. **4** and **5** will be described. The automatic insertion bookmark **30** as shown in FIG. **4** is made of either a sheet of synthetic resin or a paper member, both of which have elasticity and flexibility. The bookmark **30** includes a fixing portion **31** affixed to a book, a connecting portion **32** foldably seamlessly joined to the fixing portion **31** at an upper position thereof, and a bookmark portion **33** monolithically connected to a distal end of the connecting portion **32**.

The fixing portion **31** is substantially similar in size to that of the bookmark **10** according to the first embodiment. The fixing portion **31** includes a protruding portion **34** at an upper portion thereof. The protruding portion **34** is smaller in width than the main body of the fixing portion **31**. The fixing portion **31** has a pair of continually jointable adhesive agent layers **35**, **36** formed on either the surface of the main body or the reverse side of the main body on the right and left sides thereof. The adhesive agent layers **35**, **36** usually have respective protective sheets attached to surfaces thereof. When the bookmark **30** is used, the protective sheets are detached from the surfaces of the adhesive agent layers **35**, **36** to expose the adhesive agent layers **35**, **36**.

The band-like connecting portion **32** and the bookmark portion **33** are positioned at a central portion of the fixing portion **31** so as to be freely cut out therefrom. In addition, a proximal end of the connecting portion **32** is foldably connected to the protruding portion **34**. As shown in FIG. **4**, when the automatic insertion bookmark **30** is used, the connecting portion **32** and the bookmark portion **33** are pressed out of the fixing portion **31**. Then, the proximal end of the connecting portion **32** is bent along a folding line **37** at a substantially right angle. Further, the bookmark portions **33** is folded at a demarcation portion between the connecting portion **32** and the bookmark portion **33**. In this state, as illustrated in FIGS. **5**(A) and **5**(B), the fixing portion **31** is fixed to a book **14** by means of the adhesive agent layers **35**, **36**. More specifically, the fixing portion **31** is secured to an upper portion of either a front cover **20** of the book **16** or a back cover **18** of the book **16**, or alternatively to an upper portion of a leaf of the book **16** in the immediate vicinity of the front cover **20** or the back cover **18**. Then, the bookmark portion **33** is placed on a predetermined page **20***a*, i.e., either a page that is just read or the following page. As shown in FIG. **5**(B), when the book **16** is closed, then the bookmark portion **33** is automatically inserted between the closed pages of the book **16**.

A further automatic insertion bookmark **40** according to a fourth embodiment as shown in FIG. **6** will be described. The automatic insertion bookmark **40** as illustrated in FIGS. **6**(A), **6**(B) and **6**(C) is produced from either a sheet of synthetic resin or a paper member, both of which have elasticity and flexibility. The bookmark **40** includes a fixing portion **41**, a connecting portion **42** seamlessly joined to the fixing portion **41** at an upper-central position thereof, and a bookmark portion **43** monolithically connected to a distal end of the connecting portion **42**.

The fixing portion **41** is substantially identical in size to the fixing portion **12** of the automatic insertion bookmark **10** according to the first embodiment. Tile fixing portion **41** has a repeatedly jointable adhesive agent layer **44** on either the surface of the fixing portion **41** or the reverse side thereof. As shown in FIG. **6**(B), when the automatic insertion bookmark **40** is used, a proximal end of the connecting portion **42** is folded back by being bent into a rounded shape. The folded connecting portion **42** is further bent outward at a substantially right angle at an intermediate portion thereof. The connecting portion **42** is held in such a bent state so as not to spring back its original shape, thereby causing the connecting portion **42** to be directed downward. Further, the bookmark portion **43**, which is seamlessly joined to the distal end of the connecting portion **42**, is angled downward. In this state, the fixing portion **41** is affixed to a book **16** by means of the exposed adhesive agent layer **44**. More specifically, the fixing portion **41** is glued to an upper portion of either a front cover **20** of the book **16** or a back cover **18** of the book **16**, or alternatively to an upper portion of a leaf **19** of the book **16** in the immediate vicinity of the front cover **20** or the back cover **18**. Then, as shown in FIG. **6**(C), the bookmark portion **43** is placed on an opened page **20***a*. Thus, when the book **16** is closed, then the bookmark portion **43** is interposed between pages that were opened immediately before the book **16** is closed.

According to the present invention, an alternative bookmark **40** may be employed, in which the proximal end of the connecting portion **42** is bent at a square angle, and further the bookmark portion **43** is folded downward.

When the automatic insertion bookmark **40** is used, the proximal end of the connecting portion **42** must be held in a folded state so as not to return its original shape in order to permit the bookmark portion **43** to be automatically placed on an opened page **20***a*. Meanwhile, in the previously described automatic insertion bookmarks **10**, **21**, **30** according to the first, second, and third embodiments, the bookmark portion is naturally directed downward because the connecting portion is mounted downward with respect to the fixing portion. This feature offers an advantage in that the bookmark portion is readily interposed between the pages of the book.

A yet further automatic insertion bookmark **46** according to a fifth embodiment will now be described with reference to FIG. **7**. The automatic insertion bookmark **46** as shown in FIG. **7** is fabricated from either a sheet of synthetic resin or a paper member, both of which have elasticity and flexibility. The bookmark **46** includes a sheet of a quadrangular fixing portion **47**, a connecting portion **48**, and a bookmark portion **49**. The connecting portion **48** is formed by a sheet different from that of the fixing portion **47**. A proximal end of the connecting portion **48** is affixed to the fixing portion **47** at an upper-central position thereof. The bookmark portion **49** is integrally connected to a distal end of the connecting portion **48**. An adhesive agent layer **50** is formed on either the surface of the fixing portion **47** or the reverse side thereof. The adhesive agent layer **50** is continually usable for attachment to a book etc. at a predetermined location thereof. The connecting portion **48** and the bookmark portion **49** are seamlessly joined together as one-piece, and are then band-shaped. The proximal end of the connecting portion **48** is glued to the fixing portion **47** at the upper-central portion thereof through an adhesive agent that has an increased level of adhesive strength.

As shown in FIG. **7**(A), when the automatic insertion bookmark **46** is used, the interconnected connecting and bookmark portions **48**, **49** are raised from the fixing portion **47**. The bookmark portion **49** is then bent downward at a portion where the connecting portion **48** and the bookmark portion **49** are seamlessly joined together. As shown in FIG. **7**(B), the fixing portion **47** is affixed to a book **16** so as to expose an upper portion of the fixing portion **17**. More specifically, the fixing portion **47** is glued onto either a front cover **20** of the book **16** or a back cover **18** of the book **16**,

or alternatively onto a leaf **19** of the book **16** in the immediate vicinity of the front cover **20** or the back cover **18**. The bookmark portion **49** is then placed on a predetermined page. As a result, when the page is turned over, then the bookmark portion **49** is automatically moved onto the following page. When the book **16** is closed, then the bookmark portion **49** remains laid on a page that was opened immediately before the book **16** is closed.

In the respective embodiments as previously described, the automatic insertion bookmark assumes a planar shape before being used, while the connecting and bookmark portions are bent when the automatic insertion bookmark is used. Alternatively, the connecting portion and/or the bookmark portion may be bent to some degree in the process of manufacture of the automatic insertion bookmark.

In the above-described embodiments, specific numerals are used for convenience of description; however, the present invention is limited to neither such numerals nor the above described shapes of components. In addition, the respective sheets of the fixing, connecting, and bookmark portions are shown greater in thickness in drawings; however, these portions are actually smaller in thickness, but has elasticity and flexibility. Further, the bookmark portion is preferably transparent.

In the above-described embodiments, the automatic insertion bookmark is fixed to the book through the adhesive agent layer that is formed on one of both surfaces of the fixing portion. Alternatively, pursuant to the present invention, the fixing portion may be fitted to the book through any clamping fixture such as a clip.

Industrial Applicability

In the automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention having the above-described construction, connecting and bookmark portions have elasticity and flexibility, the connecting portion being seamlessly joined to a fixing portion that is fixed to either a front cover of a book or a back cover of the book, or alternatively to a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of the front or back cover. Further, the bookmark portion is laid on an opened page of the book at an upper portion of the page. As a result, the bookmark portion is automatically placed on the following page when the page is turned over. In this way, the bookmark portion provides automatic insertion.

Consequently, the above-described bookmark saves labor in which a sheet like bookmark is manually inserted between pages that are just read, as practiced in the past. In addition, the above automatic insertion bookmark eliminates the likelihood that such a sheet-like bookmark interposed between the pages is accidentally dislodged therefrom.

Further, when the automatic insertion bookmark has an adhesive agent layer formed on either the surface of the fixing portion or the reverse side thereof, and the fixing portion is fixed to the book through the adhesive agent layer, it then ensures that the automatic insertion bookmark can be fixed to the book. In this case, the automatic insertion bookmark is continually usable when a bonding agent (e.g., a pressure sensitive adhesive) having a reduced level of adhesive strength is used to form the adhesive agent layer.

In addition, when the automatic insertion bookmark has a insertion-through hole provided at an upper portion of the fixing portion, through which the band-like bookmark and connecting portions are inserted, the bookmark portion may be directed downward. This tendency of the bookmark portion further ensures that when a page that is just read is turned over, then the bookmark portion is placed on the following page.

A further automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention may be formed by a profile thereof being cut out from either a front cover of a book or a back cover of the book, or alternatively from a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of the front or back cover. In this case, a proximal end of a fixing portion is seamlessly joined to an upper portion of either the front or back cover, or alternatively to an upper portion of the aforesaid leaf. This structure eliminates the need to provide an automatic insertion bookmark separated from the book, and thus eliminates troubles such as loss of the separated bookmark.

In a yet further automatic insertion bookmark according to the present invention, interconnected connecting and bookmark portions may be formed in a sheet of a fixing portion by being cut out from the sheet of the fixing portion. As a result, the automatic insertion bookmark can be manufactured at reduced costs by means of a sheet having a reduced area.

Meanwhile, in a still further automatic insertion bookmark, interconnected connecting and bookmark portions may be seamlessly jointed as one-piece to a fixing portion at an upper portion thereof. In this case, although a sheet having a larger area is required to fabricate the automatic insertion bookmark, the automatic insertion bookmark can be manufactured in a simplified manufacturing process in which it is only necessary to cut an outer profile of the bookmark without the need to provide a nick in the sheet.

Further, in another automatic insertion bookmark, a sheet different from a sheet of a fixing portion may form interconnected connecting and bookmark portions. In this case, the bookmark portion is directed downward. As a result, the automatic insertion bookmark is folded at smaller angles at one demarcation portion between the fixing portion and connecting portion and at another demarcation portion between the connecting portion and the bookmark portion. Consequently, the bookmark portion is more readily inserted into the book at a smaller angle, thereby providing such an easy-to-use automatic insertion bookmark.

What is claimed is:

1. An automatic insertion bookmark designed to permit a bookmark portion to be automatically inserted into an placed on an opened page of a book at an upper portion of the page, comprising:

a fixing portion fixed to the book, the bookmark portion inserted between pages that are just read, and a connecting portion for connecting the fixing portion and the bookmark portion together, a proximal end of the connecting portion being connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion, the connecting portion being folded at one of a position where the connecting portion and the fixing portion are joined together and a position adjacent to the former position, the bookmark portion being folded at one of a position where the connecting portion and the bookmark portion are joined together and a position adjacent to the former position, whereby the bookmark portion is directed downward facing the fixing portion,

wherein an insertion-through hole is formed at an upper portion of the fixing portion, the insertion-through hole being formed by a transversely elongated hole, through which the bookmark portion and the connecting portion can be inserted, whereby the interconnected bookmark and connecting portions are inserted through the insertion-through hole in a state of the connecting portion being folded back at a certain portion thereof.

2. An automatic insertion bookmark as defined in claim **1**, wherein an adhesive agent layer is formed on one of a front side of the fixing portion and a reverse side of the fixing

portion, the adhesive agent layer providing one of tentative fixing of the fixing portion and permanent fixing of the fixing portion, in order to permit the fixing portion to be fixed to one of a front cover of the book, a back cover of the book, and a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of one of the front and back covers, whereby the fixing portion is fixed to the book through the adhesive agent layer.

3. An automatic insertion bookmark as defined in claim **1**, wherein the fixing, connecting, and bookmark portions are formed by profiles thereof being cut out from one of a front cover of the book, a back cover of the book, and a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of one of the front and back covers, a proximal end of the fixing portion being joined to an upper portion of one of the front cover, the back cover, and the aforesaid leaf, and wherein when the automatic insertion bookmark is used, the proximal end of the fixing portion is folded back, thereby permitting the insertion-through hole formed at the upper portion of the fixing portion to protrude from the top of the book.

4. An automatic insertion bookmark designed to permit a bookmark portion to be automatically inserted into and placed on an opened page of a book at an upper portion of the page, comprising:

a fixing portion fixed to the book, the bookmark portion inserted between pages that are just read, and a connecting portion for connecting the fixing portion and the bookmark portion together, a proximal end of the connecting portion being connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion, the connecting portion being folded at one of a position where the connecting portion and the fixing portion are joined together and a position adjacent to the former position, the bookmark portion being folded at one of a position where the connecting portion and the bookmark portion are joined together and a position adjacent to the former position, whereby the bookmark portion is directed downward facing the fixing portion,

wherein an adhesive agent layer is formed on one of a front side of the fixing portion and a reverse side of the fixing portion, the adhesive agent layer providing one of tentative fixing of the fixing portion and permanent fixing of the fixing portion, in order to permit the fixing portion to be fixed to one of a front cover of the book, a back cover of the book, and a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of one of the front and back covers, whereby the fixing portion is fixed to the book through the adhesive agent layer, and wherein the interconnected connecting and bookmark portion are formed in a sheet of the fixing portion by being cut out from the sheet of the fixing portion, a proximal end of the connecting portion being foldably connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion, whereby when the automatic insertion bookmark is used, the bookmark portion and the connecting portion are pulled from the fixing portion, thereby forming the connecting and bookmark portions that have respective predetermined shapes.

5. An automatic insertion bookmark designed to permit a bookmark portion to be automatically inserted into an placed on an opened page of a book at an upper portion of the page comprising:

a fixing portion fixed to the book, the bookmark portion inserted between pages that are just read, and a connecting portion for connecting the fixing portion and the bookmark portion together, a proximal end of the connecting portion being connected to an upper portion of the fixing portion, the connecting portion being folded at one of a position where the connecting portion and the fixing portion are joined together and a position adjacent to the former position, the bookmark portion being folded at one of a position where the connecting portion and the bookmark portion are joined together and a position adjacent to the former position, whereby the bookmark portion is directed downward facing the fixing portion,

wherein an adhesive agent layer is formed on one of a front side of the fixing portion and a reverse side of the fixing portion, the adhesive agent layer providing one of tentative fixing of the fixing portion and permanent fixing of the fixing portion, in order to permit the fixing portion to be fixed to one of a front cover of the book, a back cover of the book, and a leaf of the book in the immediate vicinity of one of the front and back covers, whereby the fixing portion is fixed to the book through the adhesive agent layer, and wherein the interconnected connecting and bookmark portions are bent by being folded back at a proximal position of the connecting portion, the connecting portion being further bent at a right angle at an intermediate position thereof in a direction opposite to the direction in which the connecting portion was previously folded back, the bookmark portion connected to a distal end of the connecting portion being further bend downward, whereby the bookmark portion remains directed downward.

* * * * *